

THEORIES AND FORMS OF POLITICAL ORGANISATION

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EVER SINCE the theory of Politics has existed, men have been trying by means of it to answer two different questions : How can Society, or this or that Society, best be organised and administered ? and How does it come about that Societies exist, or can exist, at all ? The first question is practical ; and those who are impelled to ask it are seeking answers to problems of their own day and generation—problems that must be resolved somehow, for good or ill, and will not wait upon man's ability to find good answers, or on the progress of human knowledge. For, in one way or another, Societies do exist, and have to be administered. The second question is, in form, theoretical and philosophic. It sets on foot an enquiry into the nature of man as a being capable of living in Society, and into the fundamental principles of political obligation. There is no such urgency to answer it, somehow, as exists in the other case ; but throughout the ages men go on asking it, and will not be content without some

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form of answer. Shall we say that in the first case the necessity is practical and external, whereas in the second the demand for an answer arises out of an inner necessity of the human mind ?

In some measure this is true ; but it is, in fact, always impossible to keep the two questions apart. Men's theoretical curiosity about the basis of political association mingles in every age with their practical desire to set Society in order ; and they are for ever seeking, in the true nature of man and Society, justifications for the particular forms of social and political organisation which they desire to impose upon their fellow-men, or to persuade them voluntarily to accept. Every age seeks to support contemporary "causes" with theories for which universal validity is claimed ; and every age makes its supposedly universal theories with one eye on the movement of contemporary events. Political Philosophy may be centred round the second question, and Political Science and the Art of Politics round the first. But the two constantly interpenetrate and combine, despite repeated efforts to keep them apart. Political Philosophy and Political Science have not separate histories, but one history common to them both, with shiftings of emphasis now this way and now that ; and the

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Art of Politics draws argument and illustration from both alike.

The attempt to separate Political Philosophy and Political Science is, indeed, comparatively modern. Foreshadowed by Rousseau in the eighteenth century, when he set out to distinguish the object of his own political writings from that of Montesquieu's, it was proved impossible in the great welter of theoretical and practical question-and-answer that we call the French Revolution. Revived again in the nineteenth century under the powerful stimulus of scientific advance, it has achieved no better success in the world of to-day. Marxism and its derivative Communism are inextricable minglings of theoretical and practical reasoning ; and Gentile, the philosopher of Italian Fascism, writes of the " National Idea " in terms which base the practical structure of the Fascist State directly on ultimate philosophic realities.

Nor is this at all surprising. The sort of mechanism men will want to create within Society will depend on what they want Society to be ; and their view of what Society should be will depend on their view of man's nature as a

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That, of course, makes it terribly hard to mark off, even provisionally, the field of political theory from the fields of other social studies. All political theories, and all practical judgments about politics, are bound to rest on assumptions, or dogmas, or doctrines about the nature of men, their instincts, desires, teachability, strength of will, patience, suggestibility, imitativeness, and a host of other characteristics innate or acquired. This psychological basis of politics may be more or less conscious or unconscious, explicit or implied, in the work of different writers and statesmen. But it can never be absent ; for it is a sheer impossibility to formulate a single political theory or project without making assumptions about the nature of man.

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THE GREEK CITY-STATE

THE GREEK CITY-STATE

THIS NECESSITY received full recognition at the dawn of conscious political theory among the Greeks of the classical period. Plato's psychology is his politics, and his political theory is his psychology, as readers of *The Republic* are well aware. There are, for Plato, three parts in the human soul : that which knows (the philosophic) ; that which is full of zeal and bravery (the spirited) ; and that which merely seeks bodily satisfaction (the appetitive) —and there are three corresponding parts in the structure of human Society, if it is rightly founded. Plato's philosopher-king stands for the necessary domination of knowledge over both spirit and desire in the body politic. Or, in a Republic, his guardians must rule as embodiments of the same principle, with a brave and zealous soldiery under them, and a merely appetitive populace kept well in subjection to do the productive work of the community. Plato's conception is essentially aristocratic. He sweeps democratic arguments and talk

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about equality of rights aside by claiming that in Society, as in a man's own soul, the best part should rule in the interests of the whole. And he sustains this dogma with his doctrine of "function." Each man, according to the varying composition of his soul out of the three parts which together make it up, has his proper function in the social system. The philosopher's function is to rule, because he knows what is best. The others can have no claim to rule, because they do not know.

Thus, at the very beginning of systematic political theory, all the great questions that have perplexed later ages are raised at once. Is political authority a matter of inalienable human right, belonging to a man simply because he is a man, or is it a matter of knowledge? Should the expert act under orders, or give them? Is politics a field for specialists, or for ordinary men and women? Does democracy involve a mere babble of incoherent voices, or is the voice of the people, in some sense, the voice of God? And underlying all these questions is another, more fundamental still: What is man? What is his nature? We must know that, or at least try to know, before we can begin to say how he ought to rule and be ruled.

Plato, of course, was theorising, and preaching

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practical doctrine, primarily for the Greek City-State. The Greek cities and islands were, indeed, the first great nurseries of political theory and of conscious experiment by the people in methods of government. Above all is this true of Athens, which was, at the height of its power in the fifth century B.C., a fully organised democratic republic of citizens, though slaves and the large foreign population which dwelt there had no part in the government. Plato, however, was writing amid the decay of the Athenian Empire after the defeat of Athens by Sparta in the Peloponnesian War, and when the glories of Athenian democracy had been for the time extinguished. His successor, Aristotle, often acclaimed as the Father of the Science of Politics as of many other sciences, strikes a different note. Plato was concerned to build up in thought an ideal republic, to fit the real needs of the human spirit. Aristotle was content rather to take the best of the available forms and methods of government, recognising that all were imperfect, but seeking to distinguish between better and worse on the basis of an elaborate study of the comparative institutions of different States. Aristotle, too, writes of, and for, the City-State, which he regards as the highest form of civilisation, and as marking off Greeks

from the "barbarians" who make up the rest of the world. His best State is, like Plato's, aristocratic in a sense, in that he will not allow that slaves, or those who do manual work, have any claim to citizenship. But among the citizen body he advocates a fairly wide distribution of political power, seeking a mixed constitution embodying both democratic and aristocratic elements.

Aristotle, however, counts as a political theorist not only for his description of the best type of City-State, but also because of his insistence that "man is by nature a social animal," so that living in Society comes to him by way of nature, and not by any merely artificial contract or coercion, and so that Society itself does not really need explaining at all. It is a fact, arising out of man's nature, and developing from the mere family stage up to the fully grown City-State as men advance in knowledge and culture.

Plato and Aristotle between them set the fashion, and laid down the shape, of political theory for many generations. Aristotle's influence, above all, remained alive and pervasive all through the Roman period, the so-called "Dark Ages" and the Middle Ages, and so passed on into the modern world. Plato, largely forgotten between the decline of Rome and the

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Renaissance, came back to widespread influence at the Renaissance, and is still to-day the most widely read of all the great political thinkers.

The City-State of the Greeks exhibited, indeed, wherever it existed, an astonishing fertility of political experiment and diverse governmental structure. Athens herself, like many of the other cities, was governed in turn by legitimate kings, by "tyrants"—that is, by personal rulers who seized power without legitimate title—by its aristocracy, and by the entire body of its citizens, and then again by aristocracies and democracies in turn, with a bewildering variety of forms and methods of administration. But with all these forms of government there was something in common—the fact that, even in Athens, by far the most populous of Greek cities, the entire body of citizens was small enough to take a direct part in the governments, or at least to be consulted as a single assembly, or to exert as a single and direct group of individuals a pressure of public opinion. Democracy, in its characteristic Athenian form, meant direct government by the people, issuing in primary assembly direct orders to their elected magistrates. A great magistrate, like Pericles, might guide them by personal ascendancy and leadership; but he had to lead, not a body of representatives, but

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the whole people. Moreover, most of the offices were elective, or depended on a mixed system of lot and election ; and these offices were very numerous in relation to the size of the population, and were mostly part-time occupations, so that a very high proportion of the whole body of citizens at some time held some definite office. The Greek City-States, save to a small extent in their federal relationships one with another, did not use, and hardly knew, the device of representative government which we in the modern world have come to regard as inseparable from democratic institutions. In classical Greek, active and not merely passive citizenship was regarded as the normal duty and privilege of every citizen ; and political consciousness was widely diffused through the entire community, which ranked political activity among its most constant and liveliest interests.

This did not make for tranquil government. Indeed, the Greek City-States easily outdid the modern Republics of South America in the number of their revolutions. Nor did it always make for wisdom : the democracy of Athens, in the days of its decline, was apt to be as excitable, unstable and shortsighted as the aristocracy was apt to be self-seeking and tyrannical. But it is safe to say that the Greeks,

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more than any other people in the history of the world, did really govern themselves and take the business of self-government seriously.

ANCIENT ROME

ANCIENT ROME

ROME, too, began as a City-State, to become the Imperial City of a world empire. The Romans, like the Greeks, passed from monarchy to aristocracy, and from aristocracy to a mixed constitution partaking of democracy. But the Roman democracy could not govern the rapidly spreading Roman Empire, which could only be held together by a strong and highly concentrated central power. After the brief episode of the Triumvirates, Cæsar's successor, Augustus, made himself Emperor, and thereafter, as long as the Empire held together, Rome was governed by a single ruler.

Great above all as practitioners of the art of ruling, the Romans bequeathed to the world their political theories in a strictly practical form. What theories they had were deeply influenced by the later Greek philosophy of Stoicism, which left its mark on the development of Roman law, especially in its international aspects. They have left to us no great books on politics like those of Plato and

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Aristotle ; but they have left the imperishably influential monument of Roman law. The legal system which they impressed upon Europe, which permeated the Canon Law and the Civil Law of the Middle Ages, which is still the foundation of much in the legal systems of the modern world, is the sole distinctive contribution of classical Rome to the theory of politics. It is, however, a many-sided contribution enough. The theory of State sovereignty, which still dominates the modern world, comes from it. So does the conception of absolute monarchy, yet of monarchy working not by caprice, but according to law. And, on the other hand, to it we owe, through the *Jus Gentium*, the germ of the conception of an International Law extending to all men and peoples by virtue of a common rule of human reason underlying all national codes, and also the idea of a universal Empire which was ever present in the mind of Mediæval Christendom, and lay behind the claims alike of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Papacy. Roman law, moreover, gave to the world the conception of corporate personality as the creation of the State, making all corporations and associations derive their recognised being from the fiat of political authority, and thus coming into conflict in the modern world with Germanic

THE MIDDLE AGES

THE MIDDLE AGES

MEDIAEVAL political theory built largely on Roman foundations, with something of Aristotle to eke out the theoretical jejuneness of Roman thought. It took from Rome the idea of universality, and from Aristotle the idea of Society as natural to man and as necessary to man for the fulfilment of his vital purposes. But the Holy Roman Empire, with its immense complexity of feudal and corporate rights and duties, was never, in fact, at all like the Empire of Augustus. It divided power among diverse claimants as much as the Romans had united it under a single head. It dreamed of universality ; but even the universal Church had in practice to recognise narrow limits to its power of interfering with the smaller powers which held temporal sway over Christendom. The Middle Ages have left, from the early Canonists and Civilians to St. Thomas Aquinas, much brilliant political thinking behind them ; but they made no realistic political theory that fitted the complicated political and social adjustments of the mediæval world. There are

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mediæval theories, as in Aquinas, about the common basis of all human Societies ; there are theories of the "two powers" of Church and State, and theories of the universal dominion of the successors of St. Peter. And there are theories, derived partly from Aristotle, about property and its rights and duties. But of feudalism as it was, or of the corporate personality of mediæval towns and guilds, the Middle Ages made no theory at all. That was left for moderns like Gierke and Maitland and Figgis to do as historians, after the conditions which they described had long passed away.

Apart from the Roman influence, the dominant quality of mediæval political thinking lies in its treatment of politics as a branch of morals. The mediæval thinker, basing his thought upon the claims of the universal Church to regulate right conduct, treated every problem in politics and economics as a problem of theological morality. This is seen, in the economic field, in the elaborate codes prohibiting "usury" and defining the conditions under which profits could justly be made by a Christian ; and, in politics, it appears in the attempt to derive all authority in the State, and all principles of obedience in the subject, from the will of God as manifested in Scripture and in the inspired utterances of the Catholic Church. The

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conscious political thought of the Middle Ages dresses itself in the garments of revealed religion, and throws around doctrines derived from Aristotle and from Roman Law the sanctions of the Church.

**RENAISSANCE AND
REFORMATION**

RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

THE REFORMATION was no less theological in its politics than the Middle Ages. It was, indeed, in practice a good deal more so ; for theological controversy, touching the very foundations of the Catholic system, speedily reacted on politics, and texts out of Scripture were never flung to and fro in desperate combat more fiercely than between the political disputants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is true that on the eve of the Reformation a purely secular note is struck once, with a startling clearness that horrified a world used to thinking in theological terms. Niccolo Machiavelli was regarded in his own day, and long afterwards, as an immoral cynic, preaching a doctrine to appeal to tyrants claiming immunity from all ethical considerations. But Machiavelli was, in truth, rather secularist than cynic. He was seeking for political thought and action a realistic basis in the facts of human behaviour rather than in the Scriptures or any *a priori* set of moral principles. If the result was

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cynicism, that was because the author of *The Prince*, strong enough to break through the universal integument of contemporary thought, was not clear enough in his own mind to formulate a new body of positive principles. He saw Italy torn asunder by the constant struggles of petty tyrants and republics, by the ambitions and intrigues of the Papacy, and by the repeated interventions of strong military powers which, in her internal divisions, she was impotent to resist. He wanted a strong Italy—Italy a nation—and saw the one hope of this in the creation of a purely secular and authoritative State, powerful enough both to repel the foreigner and to deal effectively with the disruptive tactics of ambitious Popes seeking temporal power. Making this his aim, he subordinated to it all considerations of morality and fair dealing between men, and produced a monstrosity of political thought which was none the less seminal of great ideas for being in part notably immoral in its immediate teaching.

Machiavelli's *Prince*, striking the note of nationalism and making unlimited claims for the secular power, became the secret manual of ambitious monarchs who were engaged in building up strong national States on the ruins of the Universal Empire and the Universal Church. But in the realm of political theory it is

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long before his secularism finds an important echo. The true successor of Machiavelli is the Englishman, Thomas Hobbes, a century and a half later ; and between these two lie the Reformation and the great wave of religion that followed hard upon it.

The Reformers, Lutheran and Calvinist alike, set out primarily to combat the Papacy in the religious field. But the contention was bound to be at once political as well as theological. Martin Luther and his followers could not hope to fight the papal claims with success unless they could array on their side secular support, to protect them against suppression and persecution and to balance the temporal power of the Papacy and the Catholic monarchs. Thus Luther was led irresistibly to ally himself with the rising national States, and to defend to the uttermost the claims of sympathetic secular rulers to absolute monarchy. His fierce denunciations of the German Peasants' Revolt follow logically upon this alliance between the new-made Lutheran Church and the temporal claims of the German Princes. Making religion, indeed, a matter of individual conscience and direct interpretation of the Scriptures without the mediation of a universal and inspired Church, the Lutherans became, in politics, the defenders of absolute monarchy to an extent

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that speedily menaced the religious freedom from which they had set out. *Cujus regio, ejus religio* lurked dangerously in the background of the Lutheran doctrine.

Calvinism, and to a less extent Zwinglism, in their original homes in Switzerland and speedily elsewhere, took another road combining, wherever they were strong enough, Church and State into a single unity dominated by a rigid and exacting moral code based on a new Puritan interpretation of scriptural precept. Calvin's revolution was, above all, a revolution in morals, which sought to make of Church and State alike instruments of moral control over the lives of men. In this, Calvinism carried on, extended, and made far more rigorous, the mediæval tradition. Calvin was the Pope of Geneva in a far more exacting sense than there had ever been a Pope of Rome. His *Institutes* are as thoroughly mediæval in tone and temper as they are unlike the Middle Ages in the instruments which they devise to sanction their moral precepts. The nature of these instruments, secondary for Calvin, nevertheless gives Calvinism its pre-eminent importance in the development of political thought. For Calvin, having broken from the universal Catholic Church, was compelled both to set up a new instrument of Church government in its place, and to

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furnish forth a State armed to defend his Church.

He could do this only by building Church and State alike on the collective will and activity of the body of the faithful. Calvin's Geneva was far from being a democracy: it was based essentially on the domination of an aristocracy of the Saints. But there were in it the seeds of democracy, because it appealed not to the traditional authority of a Church ruling by right and prescript, but to the continuous sustaining force of its own membership.

The democratic qualities inherent in this Calvinist conception made themselves far more plainly impressive wherever the Calvinists were not, as at Geneva, in power, but in a minority. For where Calvinism had, often in face of persecution, to organise itself as a Church without being able to remake the State in its own image, it became of necessity a force making for self-government. Undoubtedly, it diffused over Europe a powerful impulse towards self-governing institutions, and was the most influential ally of the changing economic conditions of the time in setting the face of Europe towards the development of democratic attitudes and forms of social organisation.

It is not possible in this Article to pursue further the conjoint course of religious struggles

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and political speculation and action in the Europe of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to discuss the political theories of the Counter-Reformation, the doctrines and policies of French thinkers, such as Bodin and the author of the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, or the Dutch and German contributions of Althusius, Grotius, Spinoza, and many more great names to the theories of politics and of international law. I must be content only to say a little about the course of political theory in England during this season of world-wide conflict of both aims and ideas.

The English Reformation was as nearly secular in its basis as it is possible for a nominally religious movement to be. The cleavage between Henry VIII and the Papacy raised no fundamental question either of theology or of moral conduct ; and the Church of England set out on its independent career without any break either with Catholic theology or with the Catholic moral code. There was an institutional break ; that was almost all. But such a break involved the abandonment of the ideas of universality ; and the declaration of independence of the English Church formally ratified and practically consolidated the complete and separate sovereignty of the English State. If at Geneva the State had become almost a

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branch of the Church, in England the Church became almost a branch of the State.

Thereafter a difficult situation arose. Calvinists, standing for a moral revolution to be enforced by a union of Church and State, with the Church as the dominant partner, were not likely to be satisfied with what had been done. But Calvinism was strong and growing; and it seemed essential to found the new English Church on a basis broad enough to include all the King's loyal subjects; for Church and State were thought of as co-extensive. Hence the movement, best illustrated in Richard Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, for a Church broad enough and tolerant enough to command the acquiescence of all good Englishmen, even if the extremer Catholics and the extremer Calvinists alike repudiated its tolerance. Hooker's masterpiece is directed above all against the Calvinists within the gates. They are wrong, he urges, in seeking to derive from Scripture binding rules of conduct and practice to regulate every occasion, secular and religious alike. It takes many sorts to make a world; and there is a wide sphere of conduct within which God has laid down no universal precepts, but left men free to decide on their course according to the expediency of time and place, always under the rule of the law of nature and reason.

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Hooker's tolerance, however, came before its time ; and for a century circumstances were too strong for his solution to prevail. England in the seventeenth century plunged, like the rest of Europe, into warfare in which considerations of religion and politics were mingled inextricably together, with the rising commercial classes ranged under the banner of Puritanism to destroy absolute monarchy in the name of a freedom of conscience which was also a freedom to break down the barriers of mediævalism and create a State responsive to the needs of the new commerce, the new industry, and the new forms of capitalist farming based on enclosure of the land.

Unless the Stuart monarchs, under the spell of their fatal belief in the Divine Right of Kings, had made egregious blunders, English Puritanism would hardly have triumphed even for a time ; for the mass of people would have been well content with a compromise. But Charles I threw away his crown and his head and England experienced, for a moment, the rule of the Saints. But the Genevese model, despite its appeal to Milton and other leading Puritans, would not serve for England, being indeed essentially a form of city rather than of national government. Cromwell dismissed the " Rump," and ruled for a while personally in

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the name of the Saints. But such a personal autocracy could have no permanence ; for most of England was not Puritan, and it exceeded the strength of Cromwell and his Saints to convert it. The Restoration was inevitable from the moment when the alliance of Presbyterians and Independents fell asunder.

But, though Charles II came back to reign, much had been changed, and the kingly power had been greatly diminished for good and all. The Puritans had failed ; but they left behind a trail of broken institutions and beliefs. Though James II's Catholicism was the occasion of his losing his crown, he and his descendants could have held it only if they had been content to let England develop from absolute monarchy to aristocracy. After the death of Cromwell and the decay of belief in the Divine Right of Kings, the one power that was strong enough to rule the country was the landed aristocracy. The rising commercial classes were not yet nearly strong enough to govern on secular grounds. The only possible secular government was that of the great Whig houses which ruled England from 1688 onwards.

HOBBS AND HIS INFLUENCE

HOBBES AND HIS INFLUENCE

BRITISH political theory, founded by Hooker, took shape in the midst of the great conflicts of the seventeenth century. Apologists of the Divine Right of Kings, from James I himself to Sir Robert Filmer, did battle with Puritan apologists such as Milton and Algernon Sidney, reinforced by James Harrington with his *Oceana* on the one hand and by the author of *Eikon Basilike* on the other. But far more significant than anything written from the standpoint of either the Divine Right of Kings or the ~~Rule~~ of the Saints is the contribution of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury. Earlier in the century Francis Bacon had set in his *Essays* the Machiavellian fashion of a secular approach to the problems of State ; and later, at the height of the civil conflict, Hobbes elaborated, on the side of monarchy but in sharp hostility to the doctrine of divine right, his famous theory of sovereignty based upon an all-embracing Social Contract.

To Hobbes's mind the first need of Society as order and, therefore, a power armed with

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absolute authority for the enforcement of order. Whereas Hooker, like Aristotle, had regarded Society as natural to man, and therefore as needing, in the last resort, no explanation, Hobbes represented it as an artificial condition, and the natural condition of men as a war of all against all, from which Society, by enforcing order and justice, offered them the only way of escape. The institution of Society was thus represented as a purely rational act, done by men for self-preservation and requiring the continuous sanction of absolute authority to hold its artificial unity together. Justice, according to Hobbes, was no less artificial than Society itself, and existed only in Society, as the law imposed by the sovereign. And the sovereign derived his title to obedience solely from his effective power to enforce the law: for if he could not enforce it the social contract was dissolved, and no further moral obligation could subsist.

On an utterly false psychological foundation Hobbes thus erected a theory of Society ruthlessly logical, if once his initial assumptions were granted. And this theory of his, despite its false psychology, has exercised, and still exercises, an enormous influence. Straight out of Hobbes came the legal theories of Aust and his followers, with their insistence on tl

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absolute, unlimited and indivisible sovereignty of the State. And out of Hobbes, too, though he was by no means its originator, comes the practical application to political theory and constitution-making of the doctrine of the Social Contract.

The fall of the Divine Right of Kings had left absolutism without a theoretical basis. Hobbes gave it a new secular foundation ; but the absolutism which he preached did not belong, of necessity, to a single ruler, but to the government of Society, whatever form it might take. Hobbes preferred monarchy, as likely to be more efficient in the preservation of order ; but he recognised that his doctrine could be applied equally well to justify the absolutism of an aristocratic or a democratic as of a ~~monarchical~~ government. The essence of his doctrine is that to the government, whatever its form, belongs absolute power over all the subjects.

In his own day, Hobbes found his doctrines rejected by all parties. The Cavaliers would have none of him, though he claimed to be on their side ; for they wanted the King to rule by divine right. The opponents of monarchy would not accept him ; for they mostly wanted to limit the King's power. The Saints rejected him ; for they wanted to base their rule on theological

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

IT APPEARS very plainly in Locke, the philosopher of the English Revolution of 1688, though Locke traverses most of Hobbes's doctrines and avows himself a follower rather of Hooker than of the author of *Leviathan*. Locke sets out, indeed, to limit the authority of governments and to confine them mainly to the duty of protecting the liberty and property of the subjects. He recognises that Society is natural to man and rests his case on a quite different psychology from that of Hobbes. And he derives the principles of politics from the laws of God and Nature and not, like Hobbes, from an act of human reason which removes Man from the sphere and state of Nature. But all the same he owes a great deal to Hobbes ; and his theory of the Social Contract could never have been formulated as it was without Hobbes's theory to serve as a foundation.

For Locke distinguishes, as Hobbes did not, between Society and the government. Society is, indeed, based on a contract among men and sustained by their continuous consent to its

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being. In Hobbes the people set up a sovereign once and for all, and in doing so transferred and alienated to him and his successors all their power for evermore. The contractual act was the setting up of the government. In Locke this theory changes its content. The people do not for ever alienate their rights. They remain always sovereign, with perpetual power to recall and abolish the government they have established if it prove at any time false to its trust. And as sovereignty remains in them, absolute and unlimited, the power of government can be limited as much as you please, short of destroying its validity altogether. Thus, Hobbes's absolutism serves as the framework for Locke's very different theory of limited and constitutional government as the defender of property rights—a theoretical version of the practical achievement of the English Revolution of 1688.

After 1688 England settled down to aristocratic government with a limited constitutional monarch as its titular head. For some time, in face of the practical settlement of affairs, political speculation went to sleep, or ceased to concern itself with fundamentals. The early eighteenth century formulated, in the writings of Hoadly and others, highly Erastian theories of the relation between Church and State ; it

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advanced slowly towards the acceptance of some of Locke's ideas about religious toleration ; it produced many admirable political pamphlets, written by such masters of English prose as Swift and Steele, Addison and Defoe ; and it gave a fine exhibition of charlatanism and virtuosity in Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*. But on the whole its tone and temper is best expressed in Pope's *Essay on Man*, with its twin assertions that "whatever is is right," and that :

*For forms of government let fools contest :
Whate'er is best administered is best.*

Not that the early eighteenth century was really indifferent about the forms of government, but that it regarded political authority as too securely settled in the hands of the aristocracy for its nature to be worth much argument.

Political speculation, which had found its home in England in the seventeenth century, thereupon crossed the Channel to France.

Locke's writings were of immense influence upon the Continent ; and Montesquieu, who reintroduced Aristotle's method by basing his speculations on a comparison and analysis of actual constitutions past and present, rather than on *a priori* principles, was a fervent

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admirer of the English Constitution as settled by the Revolution of 1688. Montesquieu was, indeed, the first modern political scientist, and his work gave, in the end, a new turn to political speculation. From him derive the long series of political students of constitutional practice, from Delolme and Hallam to Dicey and Anson.

Montesquieu, however, is chiefly remembered for his doctrine of the separation of powers, soon to become of vast practical influence in the Constitution of the United States. In *The Spirit of the Laws* he adapts from Locke the threefold classification of powers as legislative, executive and judicial, and declares for the exercise of these three powers by different authorities as the indispensable safeguard of political and civil liberty. It has often been pointed out that Montesquieu misinterpreted the English Constitution from which he thought to derive his doctrine. But the doctrine remains as an extraordinarily influential concept for the political history of the succeeding century.

ROUSSEAU

ROUSSEAU

HARD UPON Montesquieu came Jean Jacques Rousseau, following a very different method. For Rousseau himself sharply contrasts his method with that of *The Spirit of the Laws*. He is not, he says, like Montesquieu, a compiler and comparer of instances. He goes back to the *a priori* method and seeks to lay down the fundamental principles which underlie all healthy political action and organisation. Returning to Hobbes and Locke, he lays hold on the doctrine of the Social Contract as an explanation of the origin and existence of Society, taking from Hobbes the idea of sovereignty as indivisible and unlimited and as arising in Society at the moment when the Social Contract is made ; and from Locke the distinction between sovereign and government, which reserves supreme power for the whole people as sovereign and makes the government merely a derivative authority, always subject to the sovereign people's will. But unlike Locke, Rousseau seeks to make his sovereign active in carrying on the work of Society and not

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merely passive and acquiescent in the work of government. Thus, in Rousseau's hands the theory becomes fundamentally democratic and the claim is made that the people as a whole shall rule in fact as well as in name.

This theory has, however, for Rousseau the effect of a denial that large States or societies can ever rest on a legitimate principle. He will not agree that the sovereign people can be represented, or can in any respect alienate or delegate its rights. It must, accordingly, legislate for itself directly ; and this, obviously, can be done only in a society small enough for the entire people to assemble together. Rousseau, himself a citizen of Geneva, thus brings us back to the City-State as the only kind of society in which the terms of the Social Contract can be carried really into effect.

It might be supposed that such a doctrine preached among the Nation-States and growing Empires of the eighteenth century could have been of scant practical effect ; but, in fact, Rousseau's writings exerted an immense influence. For what men learnt from Rousseau was a theory not merely of popular sovereignty but of democratic government as well. He taught them to regard the will of the people as the only legitimate ground of political activity ; and his doctrine of the General Will, obscure

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as it was in many of its bearings, gave political thought a new turn just because it did stress popular will-power as the creative force in the political field. Men did not obey Rousseau's behest to restore the City-State ; but he did inspire them to make democracy the basis of their political institutions.

Thus, when the American Colonies revolted from Great Britain and sought for a theoretical foundation for their independence and for a practical constitution as its embodiment, they took the forms and arrangements of their new Republic largely from Montesquieu's interpretation of the English Constitution, but their first principles largely from Rousseau's *Social Contract*. It was Rousseau, above all, who first made positive democracy a live doctrine in the world of politics.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

BARELY was the American Constitution settled on the basis of Montesquieu's separation of powers, Locke's insistence on the function of the State as the protector of liberty and property, and Rousseau's doctrine of active sovereignty of the people, than the greater Revolution broke out in France and all Europe was plunged into warfare and an intense and acrimonious disputation about the first principles of political and human right. The *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* derives its ideas and arguments from Montesquieu, Locke and Rousseau as the American Constitution had done ; but revolutionary France, ringed round with the enemies of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*, was soon driven to discard the separation of powers in favour of an active and extreme concentration of political authority. Rousseauism, and not the doctrines of Locke and Montesquieu, impressed themselves most firmly on France and its admirers throughout the world while the revolutionary epoch lasted ; and Rousseauism,

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by insisting on the unlimited sovereignty of Society, prepared the way for the dictatorship of Napoleon as war leader of the young and threatened Republic.

In England and Scotland, while the events in France aroused fervent sympathies of which Tom Paine and William Godwin were the foremost theoretical exponents, the practical effect was to strengthen greatly the cause of reaction. The English governing class lived for a generation under the constant fear of violent revolution, and, stirred into panic by the fulminations of Edmund Burke, turned to strong measures of repression against every form of Radical activity. The French Revolution gave the English aristocrats the philosophy of which till then they had felt no need, and Burke formulated it for them in noble prose worthy of a better cause. The principles of the Revolution were, above all, an appeal to first principles of human reason. Burke met them not by arguments on the same plane but with a denial of reason as the right basis for politics and an assertion of the fundamental importance of a living tradition of political life made flesh in the accumulated experience of an hereditary governing class. His influence was profound. As far as Conservatism has a philosophy to-day and is not merely an attempt

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of vested interests to hold what they have or regain what they have lost, the philosophy of Conservatism is still the philosophy of Edmund Burke.

It was not, however, solely or mainly because of successful repression that England did not after 1789 follow France's revolutionary example. The entire structure and spirit of the two societies was fundamentally different. France was an absolute monarchy, under which was an aristocratic class possessed of vast privileges without political power. The circle of this class was, in the main, closed to new men, even if they made fortunes in commerce or banking, and the exactions which its privileges involved weighed down the peasantry with almost intolerable burdens. The taxes were heavy because, largely, of heavy military expenditure designed to uphold national power and prestige ; and the exemption from taxation of the privileged classes made the taxes weigh heavily on industry and commerce as well as on the common people. Consequently, the rising men, potential leaders of discontent, were not absorbed into the governing class, but left outside to make common cause in the revolution with starving peasants and angry workmen from the towns.

In England, on the other hand, the

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aristocracy possessed power as well as privilege, and showed wisdom enough neither to exempt itself wholly from taxation nor to close its ranks against the admission of new men. All through the eighteenth century it steadily recruited adherents from the class below it, both by intermarriage and by direct admission of the new rich of commerce and finance. Its own members, as mine-owners, iron-masters, owners of flocks of sheep, investors in Bank of England and East India stocks, participated in the rapid economic development of the country. The aristocratic Parliaments of the century were keenly alive to mercantile interests ; and the abundance of rotten boroughs open to purchase by the longest purse enabled rich merchants and others to find their way into Parliament side by side with the representatives of the landed classes. This gave the English aristocracy at once great strength and great adaptability. There was no such concentration of all the forces of discontent against the government in England as there was in France. France, accordingly, had her Revolution, whereas England, after standing out against any sudden change for a generation, contented herself with the Reform Act of 1832.

England, which had been the pioneer of parliamentary aristocracy, then slid gently and

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by stages into parliamentary democracy, which was to become in the nineteenth century the characteristic form of government for the developed countries of the world. The Reform Act of 1832 enfranchised only the middle classes, and the working classes had to wait for votes until the further Acts of 1867 and 1884. But from 1832 onwards it was clear that the country was heading for a system of parliamentary government based on universal suffrage. It was uncertain only how long it would take to complete the structure of formal political democracy. In fact, it was not quite completed until the concession of Women's Suffrage in 1918; and by that time parliamentary democracy was itself being challenged by new forms and theories of government and administration.

**THE PHILOSOPHIC
RADICALS**

THE PHILOSOPHIC RADICALS

THE THEORY underlying this gradual change from aristocracy to democracy was supplied, for the most part, in England not by the disciples of Rousseau or the makers of the French Revolution, but by the school of thought known as the Philosophic Radicals. The doctrines of Paine and Godwin were swept away in the panic of anti-Jacobinism which accompanied the revolutionary wars ; and when England at length reformed herself after the peace their echoes had grown faint. It was Jeremy Bentham, and not William Godwin, who set his seal to the Reform Act of 1832.

Benthamism was, indeed, and remained for the rest of the century the most powerful influence on English political thought and action. Bentham and his followers, the Utilitarians, or Philosophic Radicals, had no use for Social Contracts or National Rights or for any *a priori* judgments except their own peculiar views about human nature. Their sole test of political right was expediency, and on this alone

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they professed to base their democratic case. But in fact expediency, or utility, of course, demands a prior standard of judgment ; and in postulating as the end of politics the greatest happiness of the greatest number the Benthamists were really assuming a conclusion utterly at variance with what Burke had believed or England acted upon thitherto. They were assuming, to begin with, that any man's happiness ought to count for as much as any other's ; and they were assuming, too, that what mattered was the happiness of individual men and women and not any well-being of Society as a whole, distinguished from the individuals who composed it. Their *a priori* doctrine thus embodied a democratic individualism and their conceptions of utility could be made operative only upon this plain assumption.

Benthamism began as a destructive and critical doctrine. It was, above all, a great solvent of established dogmas and institutions. While Napoleon was sweeping the petty kingdoms and principalities of Europe free of feudal survivals and equipping them with the foundations of a new and simplified legal code, the English Benthamites, rejecting all high-sounding gospels of human rights, were criticising one institution after another by asking the simple question : " How far does this thing

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minister to the increase of human happiness ? ” And in face of the vast concurrent changes in economic conditions and social needs, one institution after another was going down before their criticism like a house of cards. It is easy to see now that they were far stronger as critics than in construction, and that their attacks on the old privileges and restrictions left the way clear for an unrestricted capitalist development that brought with it new problems of its own. But their work of destruction was none the less indispensable, and their principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number was readily capable of being turned to constructive purpose when the time was ripe. The writings of John Stuart Mill in the middle of the century well mark the transition ; for Mill hovered long between the two opposing interpretations of the Benthamite creed.

The Philosophic Radicals and their political allies and successors of the “ Manchester School ” hustled England into the full acceptance of the gospel of *laissez-faire*. Seeing the new economic system that came in with the Industrial Revolution through the eyes of Adam Smith and Ricardo and Nassau Senior, the great Victorians thought to foster human happiness by persuading the State to let economic conditions take their own course,

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convinced that some sort of preordained harmony of things would bring happiness and the common good out of the private self-interested strivings of individual men. Equally with Locke, these great Victorians desired to restrict the sphere of State action and to give free rein to private initiative. But Utilitarianism had the merits as well as the defects of its doctrine of expediency. If *laissez-faire* in industry and commerce came out of it, so, in some degree, did the movement for social reform ; for it was impossible to survey, for example, the state of public health and sanitation in England without desiring to apply remedies in the cause of human happiness. Edwin Chadwick's great Reports on the health and housing of the urban poor in the eighteenth-forties are landmarks in the history of social reform ; and long before the structure of *laissez-faire* was complete the State had begun upon a new career of intervention in the spheres of factory inspection, public health, legislation and similar measures of social justice.

These, emphasised in the writings of John Stuart Mill, constitute the constructive outcome of the Benthamite gospel ; and much of the best of modern social legislation can be traced back directly to this influence. But the new

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forms of constructive State intervention rested always on a basis of demonstrable necessity. For the Benthamites the presumption was always in favour of letting things alone; intervention was justified only if clear proof could be given of abuses that could not be remedied without the action of the State. The Benthamites remained to the end individualists, trusting, on the whole, to the free play of economic forces to increase the welfare and happiness of Society.

HEGEL AND MARX

MEANWHILE, on the Continent of Europe political thought had been developing along very different lines. When Europe settled down after the revolutionary wars the dominant school of thought came to be for a time the Hegelian—developed by Hegel out of Kant, and by Kant out of Rousseau. As against the Utilitarian glorification of *laissez-faire* and private initiative the Hegelian doctrine glorified the power and authority of the State, bidding the individual seek to realise himself not in his own private concerns alone but far more and more fundamentally in and through his contribution to the life of the State. The State was, indeed, for Hegel a mystical being—an end in itself to which the separate individuals who at any time made it up must contribute according to their capacity, and in which they themselves would realise the best in life.

This metaphysical theory of the State has obvious affinities to the view preached by Burke in his diatribes against the French Revolution, for both make the claims of

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individuals subordinate to the well-being of the State itself as the highest good, and both are strongly imbued with an historical attitude which sees in a continuous tradition belonging to the State the highest incarnation of human value. It has also obvious tendencies towards autocracy, in that it emphasises the State's unity and preaches therewith a gospel of subjection, and towards aristocracy, in that it emphasises the inequality of different men's capacities for service of the State rather than the equality of human needs. It leads readily, moreover, to a judgment of the virtue of the State according to its power, and therewith to a glorification of war and Empire as means to the self-realisation of the State. And, above all, regarding the State as the highest form of human achievement and value, it denies the aspiration towards human brotherhood over the whole world and leaves State ranged against State as man was ranged against man in Hobbes's imagined condition of Nature.

More than enough has been written of the impression which the Hegelian view of the State made on the formative minds of nineteenth century Germany to make it unnecessary to stress the point here. What is important for our purpose is that out of German Hegelianism, inverted and adapted to a very different

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purpose, came the new conception which, as the century advanced, was to challenge both Prussianism and the complacent parliamentary democracy of Victorian England. Marxian Socialism took much of its shape, though not its content, from the teaching of Hegel. For Hegel, progress consisted in the gradual realisation of the "Idea," of which material things and conditions were but the reflection. This process was at every stage a conflict in which the dominant idea met with its opposite, its contradiction, until out of the contention came a fusion of old and new, creating a synthesis, a higher idea blended of the two and destined to be superseded by a similar process of conflict in its turn.

Karl Marx took this evolutionary conception and turned it upside down. For him the determining factor was not the "idea," but the material equipment of Society, for ever dictating new methods of production and new social and economic arrangements designed to further their development. This doctrine is the Materialist Conception of History which makes the "powers of production," in their ceaseless development, the true cause of changing social structures and class relationships in Society. As the "powers of production"—the material resources at man's disposal, and man's

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knowledge of their use—develop from stage to stage, different forms of economic organisation are required, and from these follow different arrangements of social classes and different distributions of power. At one time the main power belonged to the great landlords ; and Society was constructed in accordance with their needs. Then came industrial and commercial developments which made the traditional authority of these landlords obsolete ; and in due time the upper strata of the industrial classes—the employers—after fighting their way against the opposition of the old governing class, were invited to share in its authority, and a new governing class based on the fusion of the two came into being. But, in order to develop the productive resources at the disposal of Society, the industrial capitalists were compelled to gather the workers together into factories, and to subject them to a common discipline of production. This inevitably gave these workers power and opportunity to organise against their masters : in other words, it created the modern Labour Movement with its growing challenge to capitalist demands and assumptions. In the end, according to Marx, this subject class, to which the rights of organisation and protest cannot be denied, is destined to overthrow the capitalist class and

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Capitalism as an economic system. It will do this, Marx holds, because it is better fitted than the class which it supersedes to make full use of the developing powers of production that are at man's command. But with the victory of the proletariat there will remain no subject class to be exploited ; and with the coming of a classless Society exploitation will cease, and the government of class by class give place to the social administration of the community's resources in the interests of all.

This is obviously not the place for any account of Marx's economic theories. What concerns us here is his conception of their political reactions. But it is difficult to keep the two apart because for the Marxist politics is not an independent science, but only a study of the reflections of economic causes in the political sphere. The State is not a self-subsistent reality, based on any real solidarity of the community as a whole, but only an emanation from the class-relationships which exist in the economic sphere. It is merely an "executive committee for administering the affairs of the ruling class as a whole." Accordingly, as long as Capitalism continues to exist, the Marxist holds that there can be no real democracy, however widely the franchise may be extended ; for it is meaningless to speak of

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equal political rights among men who are subject to gross economic inequalities. The cherished democratic conceptions of the nineteenth century are thus swept away with the wave of a hand ; and the demand for true democracy is based on a demand for the abolition of economic inequality and class exploitation.

This theory has powerful repercussions in the sphere of political practice ; for it means that as the State is a reflection of the dominant economic class, each new class that rises to power on the basis of the changing forms of production needs to remake the State in its own image. The workers, according to Marx, need, not merely to capture the existing State and use it for their own ends, but to destroy it together with the class which it represents, and to set up a new institution in its place. Marxists, agreed so far, differ widely among themselves concerning the nature of this new institution and the method by which the replacement is to be achieved. The orthodox Social Democrats of Germany and many other countries take one view and the Communists take another—both schools of thought claiming that what they advocate is the only true Marxian view. It will, however, be more convenient to discuss this problem at a later stage when we

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come to deal with the doctrines and conflicts of the twentieth century ; for it is in our own day that the divergence between Communism and Social Democracy has come dramatically to a head.

Marx's doctrine was clearly outlined as early as the Year of Revolutions, 1848, in the famous *Communist Manifesto* which he and Engels published in that year. But Socialism, or Communism, was not strong enough at that stage to provide the central issue of the European struggle. Though Socialism of one sort or another figured in the movement of 1848 in both France and Germany, the main conflicts of that year were based rather on attempts to establish parliamentary democracy or to secure national unity and independence than on any bid of the working class for the overthrow of Capitalism. France established a bourgeois Republic which was speedily replaced by the bourgeois Imperialism of Napoleon III. In Germany the Frankfort Assembly made an unsuccessful attempt to achieve at once national unity and constitutional democracy. In England Chartism flickered out and died before the self-confident parliamentarism of the new British governing class. The time was not ripe for Socialism to take the centre of the stage ; and Marxism had to wait its opportunity. The

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influence of the *Communist Manifesto* came in two later movements—the rise of Social Democracy after the foundation of the First International in 1864, and the rise of Communism after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Meanwhile, after the suppression of the revolution of 1848 Europe shaped for herself a different course. In the realm of political theory Darwinism produced a deep effect, by imbuing thinkers with an organic conception of Society. Very different conclusions were drawn by different writers from the Darwinian ideas. Some, like Herbert Spencer, stressed the factor of the struggle for existence, and based on evolutionary concepts an idea of Society as the scene of a permanent struggle, in which the fittest would survive if natural forces were allowed to take their course. This doctrine developed into the purest and crudest Individualism and allied itself with the economic school of *laissez-faire* to oppose every extension of the powers and intervention of the State. But, on the other side, writers such as Huxley regarded it as the mission of Society to control and supersede the struggle for existence, making of the community not a jungle, but an ordered garden ; while Prince Kropotkin in his *Mutual Aid* sought to derive Communism from the biological necessity of co-operation among men

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and animals. Other writers seized on the conception of Society as an organism and used it to demand the co-ordinated control of all the parts of the community by the State, as a man's brain co-ordinates and controls his entire body. In the long run the two latter conceptions were the more influential ; and the growth of science did make for strengthening the movement towards the co-ordinated control of the life of Society. But in the later Victorian era biological analogies were over-simplified and over-stressed on both sides of the argument by individualists and Socialists alike, until the critically minded became sick of analogies and set out to find a new basis for the study of Society either in the classification and comparison of actual social institutions, or in the attempts at a scientific study of the structure and working of the human mind.

**ANTHROPOLOGY AND
PSYCHOLOGY**

ANTHROPOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

THE FIRST of these two methods received, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, powerful reinforcement from the growth of Anthropology, and the more intensive study of the social institutions of primitive peoples past and present. The work of the followers of Spencer in this field, of Sir James Frazer, Professor Westermarck, L. T. Hobhouse, and a host of American and Continental scholars—Professor Ross, for example—threw a world of new light on the mind and social organisation of primitive peoples and drew theoretical students of politics away from the pure rationalism of the earlier schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to a more realistic way of looking at the actual institutions and behaviour of advanced as well as primitive peoples. The new stream of influences mingled readily, as in the work of Dr. Rivers, with materials of a similar tendency drawn from the growing study of psychology. The work of William James provided a mass of material ready and waiting for

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application to the social field ; and in their very different ways Professor McDougall and Professor Graham Wallas laid hold on this material and applied it to the creation of a new study of Social Psychology. And later in the new century the work of Professor Freud also began to make its mark on the shape and content of political theory.

This explanation of the psychological basis of politics took many different forms. Some writers, like McDougall, directed their attention mainly to a study and classification of the social instincts in men, discussing rather man as a social animal than the actual political and social institutions in which he embodied his social instincts and desires. Others, like Professor Wallas, began rather at the institutional end and studied the actual working of parliaments, committees and associations from a realistic standpoint, using the data—often none too clearly formulated by the psychologists—of individual psychology as the basis for a theory of the psychology of Society itself.

Whatever the angle of vision might be, the positive effect of all these new ways of approach—anthropological and psychological alike—was to make men far more sceptical both of answers to the social question which purported to lay down any universally right form of social

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organisation independent of considerations of time or place and of any purely rationalistic approach to the problem of politics. This does not mean that the anthropologists and psychologists generally set out to proclaim the advantages of irrationalism. Far from it! Some of them—Professor Wallas, for example—remained convinced rationalists in that they saw in the advance of human reason to the control of social life the main mark of the progress of civilisation and the chief hope for the future of mankind. But while they might still put their trust in reason, they were led by the new influences to regard the actual working of present and past forms of Society in a far less rationalistic spirit and to make, at the least far greater allowances for the irrational in man as a necessary element in the working of any possible Society. Their entire standpoint came to differ radically from that of Godwin, on the one hand, or Bentham, on the other, or even from that of John Stuart Mill or T. H. Green. They came to recognise that much of men's social action was, and must be, under any Society instinctive rather than rational, and that forms and projects of social and political organisation must be judged not in the light of pure deductive reason but in relation to their appeal to men's instincts and passions.

POLITICAL PLURALISM

POLITICAL PLURALISM

SOME SCHOOLS of thought, profoundly influenced by the new ideas that were in the air, went much further than this. The opening decade of the present century was marked by a revolt, in theory and practice alike, against the over-simplified conceptions of purely parliamentary democracy. This revolt found shape and substance in certain other studies and in certain practical movements which seemed to fit in closely with the new teachings of the psychologists and anthropologists. A revival of mediæval studies, in the hands of Gierke in Germany and F. W. Maitland in Great Britain, served to emphasise the importance and spontaneity in mediæval Society of institutions and associations which expressed a large part of the spirit of community, but in no sense owed their being or their authority to the creative fiat of the State. The State thus came to be regarded not as standing for the whole organised life of Society, but as one among a number of social institutions and associations, of which each embodied in its degree some part or element in

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the total life of the community. Herbert Spencer's direct and simple opposition between "the man" and "the State" was thus transcended and half obliterated in a new view of the community as finding expression in a complex body of social institutions and relationships, among which the State might be first but only *primus inter pares*. Political Pluralism came into fashion, challenging the old unitary conceptions of political obligation and the old simple contrast between sovereign and subject.

It was no accident that these new views began to gain ground just at a time when certain forms of voluntary association were powerfully challenging the supposed absolute authority of the Sovereign State. In face of the rise of large-scale capitalist combines, America and Europe were finding that it was easier to pass laws against trusts than to secure their enforcement, and that great aggregations of capital directed by small groups of powerful financiers held, in practice, an authority over public policy and the lives of men that ordinary measures of legislation were almost helpless to counteract. Moreover, mass production and large-scale capitalism were calling into existence no less large and influential combines of manual workers. The Trade Unions, which Victorian jurists had been content to regard as the mere

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tolerated creatures of the State, possessing only so much of right as the State law chose to accord them, were coming to assert themselves as independent powers, claiming a right to act on behalf of their members and to strike even in defiance of the State's prohibition.

In the years before the War of 1914 a wave of Labour unrest swept over the industrialised world. Syndicalism in France and Italy, Industrial Unionism in the United States, and Guild Socialism in Great Britain, were all incarnations of a new Labour spirit hostile to the traditional conceptions of parliamentary democracy. Germany indeed, divided between a Hegelian Imperialism and a Social Democratic interpretation of Marxism, seemed to be little touched by the new ideas ; but elsewhere they were, in 1914, making a powerful appeal to the younger generation. One and all, despite their very great differences in other matters, these new theories and policies stood for a conception which sought to base the new life of a recreated Society, not on a parliamentary state, but on the spontaneous life of a variety of associations primarily economic, and founded on the idea of function, or work, as the course of creative vigour in the community. A new conception of functional democracy, with a diversified social structure at its back, came to challenge the

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“one man, one vote” conception of parliamentary democracy.

These movements were echoed, and paralleled, in other spheres Churchmen, under the influences of J. N. Figgis, protested against the Erastianism of the Church Establishment, and sought to re-animate religion by giving it a recognised place in the life of society independent of, and co-ordinate with, the life of the State. Free Churchmen, such as Dr. Orchard, began to think along the same lines ; and modernists and Ultramontanes were alike influenced by the new ideas. The years before the War were everywhere fertile in plans for reorganising the life of society on a basis not of “one man, one vote” but of the recognition of the community as a related complex of distinct functions, each needing a distinct and self-governing organisation of its own.

In the economic sphere the thought of Georges Sorel in France made of this view an activist philosophy of social life. The old conception of merely voting citizenship was denounced as essentially passive and uncreative ; and men were invited, in the name of active citizenship, to realise themselves in and through a host of functional associations in which they could perform positive service. Spontaneity of action, free expression of personality were

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stressed, in preference to any rationalised ordering of the life of society according to a simple intellectual plan. It was insisted that men would be moved to action, not so much by rational arguments, as by emotional appeals, or appeals to instincts of solidarity and self-expression, made practical in "social myths" such as the syndicalist myth of a "General Strike."

It is, of course, easy to exaggerate the direct influence of theories like those of Sorel in France or the Guild Socialists in Great Britain on the mass of the people. Neither Syndicalism nor Guild Socialism, as a theory, ever extended beyond a comparatively narrow circle. But these schools of thought did serve as interpreters of what was passing, far less consciously or articulately, in the minds of ordinary men. There was widespread disillusionment with the results of Parliamentarism, and a growing tendency to rely on forms of special functional association and on "direct action" in some shape for the achievement of political and economic ends.

WAR AND REVOLUTION

WAR AND REVOLUTION

THE WAR took Europe at a time when these new ideas were still in the stage of being formulated, and made the basis of positive theories and methods of action. Momentarily, it interrupted both the process of thought and the tendencies towards positive action in the economic field. But actually war-time experience, while it added immensely to the powers and activities of the various States, and made them for the time being the focusing points of the entire national effort, at the same time reinforced the realistic views we have been describing. For the States, in order to mobilise their several national resources, found themselves compelled, in practice, to call in the advice and assistance of a host of functional associations, and to take such bodies in varying degrees into partnership, or use them as agencies for the execution of the national policy. Associations of traders and manufacturers on the one hand, and Trade Unions on the other, found themselves regularly consulted and enrolled in the national service, while such movements of opposition to the War as existed in the various

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countries could only find strength and expression by organising themselves in voluntary societies of protest and agitation, either in the political or in the economic field. When, after the War, the States proceeded, as quickly as they could, to divest themselves of their added war-time functions, and to promote a return to the *status quo ante bellum*, the associations which were thus sundered from positive administrative functions within the State were left far stronger and with far more desire for a share in authority than before the War. There could be, in fact, no real return to the old conditions, for the War had radically altered both the political and economic configuration of the world, and the real structure of the political societies and economic units of which it was made up.

Moreover, war had been the signal for revolution. In Germany the Hegelian Empire had gone down in defeat, leaving the German people both prostrate under the victors and doubtful and divided about the form of the new society that should take its place. If, for the moment, the form adopted was that of parliamentary democracy under the initial guidance of the Social Democratic Party, this was far less because these things really commanded the allegiance of the German people than because

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there was nothing else available. The fall of the Hegelian Empire left a great blank in the political consciousness of the German nation ; and ever since 1918 German politics have reflected the chaos of this consciousness. There is still, in 1931, no approach to a solution of the problem of German government.

Far greater and more influential than the German Revolution, because based on the clear conception of an alternative way of government, was the Russian Revolution of 1917. The fall of Russia's half-civilised despotism was, indeed, followed at first by the rule—or failure to rule—of a Government not unlike, in many of its features, the Government of Ebert and Scheidemann in Germany. But the episodes of Lvov and Kerensky were brief, and, within a few months of the collapse of Czardom, the Bolshevik party under Nikolai Lenin had seized power and issued to all the governments of the world the most authoritative challenge since 1789.

HEGEL AND MARX

COMMUNISM

COMMUNISM

IN ORDER that we may understand what took place in Russia, and its persistent and growing influence on the world as a whole, we must go back to what was said earlier on about the doctrines of Karl Marx. For Russian Bolshevism, or Communism, is simply Marxism reinterpreted in terms of the conditions and ideas of the twentieth century. We have seen that, after Marx's day, while his disciples remained broadly in agreement about the basis of his economic doctrines, they differed widely about their practical and political implications. The German Social Democrats and many other parties founded upon the German model (*including the Russian Mensheviks*) set to work to create parliamentary Socialist parties, and to use these parties, as opportunity arose, for the advocacy and advancement of particular social reforms, with the aim of a gradual conquest of the State and a gradual transformation of Capitalism into Socialism by a succession of legislative measures changing, bit by bit, the character of the organised life of Society. The

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Bolsheviks, on the other hand, offered a radically different—and, in my view, a far more correct—interpretation of Marx's teaching. The capitalist State, they insisted, could not be captured and applied to Socialist uses. It would have to be overthrown ; and the victorious workers, or their leaders in the struggle, would then have to create in its place on the morrow of the revolution a new State of an utterly different kind and spirit, designed to serve their own utterly different ends.

This new State, however, could not itself be, in any full sense, Socialist or Communist. To the mind of the Communist, indeed, the idea of a Communist State is a contradiction in terms ; for to him the word " State " connotes an instrument for the coercion of one class by another, and with the full coming of Communism coercion of class by class will have disappeared because there will no longer be any classes at all. Under Communism, its adherents say, there will be an administrative machine but not a " State."

But for some time after the successful overthrow of the capitalist State, the Communists tell us, there must be a State of a radically different kind. For Societies cannot pass straight from Capitalism to Socialism. There must be an intervening period during which the

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victorious proletariat first consolidates its power, defends itself against the onslaughts of counter-revolution and completes the extermination, or merging in itself, of the dispossessed old ruling class, and then accustoms itself to the new classless way of living, and builds up for itself the social habits and forms of organisation necessary for the free functioning of a classless Society. This is the period known as the season of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"—a phrase quoted from Marx's own writings—the period through which the Communists claim that Russia, fourteen years after the Revolution, is still painfully passing.

This idea of dictatorship occupies a key position in the theory of Communism. In their ideals about the new Society at which they are aiming, the Communists do not necessarily differ at all from other Socialists who look forward to complete Socialism as the next stage in social evolution. Their difference is one of method and not of final objective. They believe that the cleavage between the old Society and the new must be sharp and absolute, that the new must be built right up from freshly laid foundations and in a fresh environment carefully prepared for the minds of men, and that the building of it must be undertaken by a State wielding almost unlimited authority, acting on behalf of the

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proletarian class, and destined to "wither away" as soon as the work of Socialist construction has been solidly achieved. There is to be a period of transition between the fall of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism ; and during this period the proletariat must be "dictator," using as its instrument a specially constructed State of its own.

A class, however, cannot dictate directly, or in its own person. It may, indeed, take the place of the "sovereign people" of earlier theories, standing behind and sustaining the Government by its organised will-power. But it cannot be the Government, or even directly appoint it or tell it what to do. Between the proletariat and the actual executive Government, accordingly, there must be a mediating body, an organised collective expression of the will of the proletarian class. This, according to the Communists, is the function of the Communist Party, open to all class-conscious proletarians who have the will to share in the work and responsibilities of the new governing class.

Out of this idea arises the dual system of government in contemporary Russia. The proletariat is there represented twice over—as a sovereign class in the system of local and district Soviets, up to the national Soviet Congress of the entire U.S.S.R., and as a

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governing class in the Communist Party, to which the flower of the proletarian class belongs.

Under this arrangement it is, in effect, the Communist Party that debates and decides upon major questions of policy ; and the Congress of Soviets, while it formally holds the supreme legislative power, serves rather as a means of broadcasting throughout the U.S.S.R. the policy which the party has already laid down. The Congress, it should be noted, is not, like the Parliaments of Western Europe and America, a body in more or less permanent session, but an occasional gathering of delegates, represented between sessions by a Præsidium with which the executive organ, the Council of People's Commissaries, and the Political Committee of the Communist Party keep in close and constant contact.

The Soviet Constitution and the actual methods of government in the U.S.S.R. alike run directly counter to the basic assumptions of parliamentary democracy. The franchise in Russia is, indeed, very widely diffused ; but it is a class franchise, from which those who belong to the "exploiting" classes, including private traders and the *kulaks* (or rich peasants), are excluded. Its principle is not "one man, one vote," but rather "one worker, one vote."

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Moreover, the Communist system repudiates the secret ballot which has been regarded as the necessary complement of the wide franchise in parliamentary countries. The local Soviets are elected and elect their representatives to regional and national Soviets and Congresses by open voting ; and very often this means that the official Communist list of candidates is chosen *en bloc* and without opposition. The object, one must understand, is not to reflect individual opinions, but to secure the adequate representation of a class interest and point of view. Accordingly, the Communist Party dominates the elections. The representation, moreover, is weighted in favour of the urban workers in order that they may not be swamped by Russia's vast peasant population ; and this weighting adds in practice to the electoral influence of the party.

We have thus, in the U.S.S.R., an avowedly partisan State founded on a class basis, but conceived, not as the ruling instrument of a finished Socialist Society, but as the instrument of the gradual transition to such a Society. The measures designed gradually to exterminate the private trader and the *kulak*, the campaign for the socialisation of agriculture, and the Five Years' Plan of intensive industrialisation, are all conceived as steps on the road to a

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Socialist system which, when once it has been achieved and consolidated, will render unnecessary the existence of the class-State, because it will have made an end of the existence of classes. But here a word of caution is necessary. For the Communists the Russian Revolution was, and remains, not an independent national movement designed to lead to the creation in Russia of a Socialist Society, but a part of fragment of the World Revolution without which its victories cannot be consolidated or made secure. The class-State in Russia will continue to be needed as long as the existence of capitalism outside Russia still faces the U.S.S.R. with the risk of Counter-Revolution, or as there remains anywhere in the world a section of the proletariat still awaiting emancipation. Thus, the disappearance of the State in Russia is postponed to the indefinite future ; and all peaceful relations of the U.S.S.R. with the capitalist world outside are but truces in a class-war that can end only in a world made safe for Socialism.

Nevertheless, within the U.S.S.R., the Communist Party is already striving to build up organs of economic administration which will in time become self-acting, without the need for political control. The " Trusts " which conduct State industries, the planning Commissions and

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controlling Councils which direct and co-ordinate the economic life of the country, the Trade Unions and Co-operative Societies which have been given a recognised place in the system of administration, are the true organs of social control which are destined to replace and outlive the class-State and the dictatorship of the proletariat when the time comes for political government to be superseded by economic administration.

Such, in broad outline, is the Soviet system, with the hierarchy of Soviets from those of village and factory up to the Central Congress, with its parallel hierarchy of branches, committees and Congresses of the Communist Party with its Five Years' Plan and its third hierarchy of economic bodies responsible for its execution and, above all, with its fervid faith in the power of men to be stirred to continuous action and service by means of a compelling mass-appeal. For this attempt to enlist the conscious will and enthusiasm of the proletariat on the side of the new system, to persuade men to work as well as to fight hard for the consolidation of the new Society, to create a community consisting of active instead of merely voting citizens on the basis of an equalitarian appeal, is, far more than the dry constitutional structure of the new Russia, the essential feature of

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Communism. The Five Years' Plan, with its effort to speed up industrialisation at the cost of keeping down the immediate standard of life, puts on the population of Russia, and particularly upon the urban workers, a strain which would be clearly intolerable unless there were faith behind it. The Five Years' Plan, and the Soviet scheme altogether, can succeed only if it is true, as the Communists believe, that proletarian faith can move mountains. Yet—hard as it is to get authentic information—the Plan does seem to be succeeding so far.

FASCISM

FASCISM

IT is natural to compare with Russian Communism the other new form of political organisation which is challenging parliamentarism in contemporary Europe. Italian Fascism has, in terms of method, certain features in common with the Russian system—above all, its insistence on activity and not passivity as the function of citizenship, its attempt to exclude hostile elements and doctrines from any share in the control of the State, and even from any effective means of expression, its desire to co-ordinate under the banner of the State all active forms of voluntary association and all important forms of communal life, and its determination to give the Fascist Party, whatever the nominal character of the political system, the dominant place in the determination of policy. The methods of Fascism and Communism are, in many respects, closely akin ; but the ends which they set before themselves are, of course, radically different.

For they are based on two radically different and conflicting concepts. For the Communist,

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schooled in Marxism, the underlying reality is the reality of class, and upon class must the foundations of the new Society be built. But for Fascism the underlying reality is the Nation—the “National Idea,” and the end of politics is to make the Nation great and to find a political organ which shall be expressive of the entire national life. As the ideas of Marx and Mazzini clashed in the making of the International Working Men’s Association of 1864—the “First International”—so the ideas of Nationalism and of Marxist Socialism are at variance in the world to-day. But the clash is more violent because Nationalism is for the Italians, and for most of the peoples of Europe, no longer something to be won by victory over a foreign oppressor, but a thing possessed already in form, but needing to be made flesh and guarded against the onslaughts of Internationalism and Socialism.

Italian Fascism, created by the ex-Socialist, Benito Mussolini, arose out of the chaotic faction-fights of post-War Italy. Parliamentary government had there been always weak and vacillating; and, in face of the rising influence of Socialism during and after the War, it had become practically impotent. It was almost true that Italy was not being governed at all, and that no one had either power or will to make

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or to enforce the laws. The Socialists, for their part, were powerful enough to paralyse government, but not powerful enough to take it into their own hands ; for they had little hold on the agrarian South, and feared that their seizure of authority in the North might only lead to a prolonged and disastrous civil war, in the course of which they might easily be starved into submission by foreign blockade. Consequently they hesitated, refusing to work the old system, and not daring, despite their sympathy with Russia, to institute the new. As in Germany and France, no great Socialist leader arose to guide their policy, and they floundered helplessly. The Government, in even worse case, floundered too, until there set in a general disgust with the failure of parliamentarism, combined with a loss of faith in the Socialist alternative. For a time, it seemed as if this situation might lead to the triumph of the progressive Catholic Party of Don Sturzo—the *Popolari* ; but the Party, lacking a clearly defined policy or a wide enough basis of working-class support, fell also into impotence. The road was left clear for Fascism, to which all manner of discontented elements began to have recourse—from Syndicalists of the extreme left to militant and militarist Nationalists of the extreme right. D'Annunzio's Fiume adventure, with its

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fanciful devising of the Constitution of Cornaro and its appeal to Italian irredentism and disappointment with the spoils of the War, brought in a host of new recruits ; and the situation which arose when the Italian Socialists and Trade Unionists, having declared a great strike and occupied the factories in defiance of the Government, drew back and refused to attempt to take government into their own hands, completed the discredit of the Socialist leaders. Rome was thereafter any strong man's for the taking ; and it was not long before the King went over to Fascism, and the Fascist march on Rome registered the passing of authority into the hands of Signor Mussolini.

Fascism was, at this time, a call to action rather than a theory or a programme. It could be defined in terms of its "hates," but hardly of its positive doctrines, save that it was nationalist, that it appealed chiefly to youth, and that it laid stress on action rather than thought as the vital matter. It hated Communism, and all forms of internationalism and class-warfare. It hated parliamentarism, which it denounced as the cause of Italian impotence and mismanagement. It hated pacifism, because it set limits to the range of Italian ambition, and denied the ultimate validity of the nation and of nationalist morality.

On this somewhat slender basis of hates and loves, Fascism has gradually built up for itself a comprehensive, if not always clear or consistent, political theory and outlook. This theory bases itself, first and foremost, upon the idea of the Nation as the ultimate moral being. To the Nation all things and persons are to be subordinate, and in and through the Nation they are to seek their self-realisation. Men owe duties to the Nation ; but the Nation itself owes no duties. It may have dealings—peaceful and friendly as well as warlike and inimical—with other Nations ; but it recognises no superior to itself, and no subordination to the family of Nations of which it is a member. In an almost Nietzschean spirit, it seeks self-expression and expansion, so that the world's peace depends on nothing getting in the way of its ambitions. It is in this thoroughly Hegelian and metaphysical. For those who accept it, the Nation is the universal ; and the object of politics is national self-realisation.

This means Imperialism without, for the Nation must have room to breathe and to expand. It involves, accordingly, an extolling of the military virtues, and a constant militancy of tone among Italian diplomats. This does not necessarily mean that Italy wants to go to war, unless she can find an opponent she is quite sure

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to beat ; for Fascist Italy preserves, amid all her high-sounding talk, a fair share of practical common sense. But it does mean that Italy must always be contemplating war as a possibility, and must never put herself in a posture of pacifism even when she means to keep the peace.

The National Idea means, in addition, concentration within ; for the entire life of the Society must be grouped and organised, as far as possible, around the Nation-State. In particular, no organ of action or expression must be tolerated within the community unless it is prepared to yield homage to the National Idea, and to co-operate in its realisation. This involves especially the destruction of the Labour Movement, in the form which it has spontaneously assumed in Italy, as in other countries ; for the working-class, like the Capitalist system, takes much the same shape in all industrialised countries, and is essentially " tainted " with internationalism. Trade Unions and Socialist Parties alike have their international affiliations, and pay homage to the idea of international class solidarity. Accordingly, Fascism must root them out ; but it cannot do this unless it is also prepared to replace them ; for there must in modern Society be means of organised expression for working-class needs

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and, unless these are recognised and granted, they will inevitably take forms hostile to the desires of those who seek their extermination.

Fascism, therefore, in destroying the established working-class in Italy, set out to replace it by a new movement made in the Fascist image. Instead of Socialist Trade Unions, there should be Fascist Unions, officered by approved supporters of Fascism and refusing admission to all malignants and recusants. Upon these bodies wide powers should be conferred, including the power to levy contributions on non-members as well as members. They should be given exclusive recognised rights of collective bargaining with the employers; and they should be grouped with the corresponding employers' associations in State-recognised Corporations for the supervision of each industry or service as a whole. And, finally, as part of a general change in the structure of the Fascist State they, instead of the old geographical constituencies, should serve as electoral Colleges, along with other functional bodies, for the choice of members of the new Fascist legislature.

Gradually, the Fascist Government has carried these ideas into effect. It has founded, organised and endowed with special privileges and authority Fascist Trade Unions and

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Employers' Associations, Fascist Corporations made up of both elements, Fascist Professional Associations and Co-operative Societies—in short, it has given to every possible form of voluntary association a Fascist basis, making each an organ of the Fascist State in its own sphere, and carefully ensuring that each shall be officered and controlled only by adherents of the Fascist Party. How far this system has really come to command the allegiance of a large section of the Italian working-class it is not easy to say ; for it is an essential part of Fascism, as of Communism, to forbid free expression of hostile opinion. It has, at any rate, held fast so far, and prevented the effective revival of contacts between the workers of Italy and the organised Labour movements of other countries.

THE CORPORATIVE STATE

THE CORPORATIVE STATE

THIS IDEA and policy of Fascism are commonly described as the idea and policy of the "Corporative State." The Fascist State is conceived as consisting, not simply of so many individuals, but of these individuals grouped, according to their several functions, in a number of Corporations through which they are related to, and take their part in, the life of the State. Under the State itself the Corporations form the next order of reality, and in them, under the State, the life of the Nation must be expressed.

This conception has evidently much in common with the political Pluralism described earlier in this Article, in that it recognises the reality of functional association, and the necessity of according to it a recognised place in the organised life of Society. But the Fascist idea is at bottom radically different from such pluralistic conceptions as Guild Socialism ; for Fascism simply seeks to make its Corporations subordinate contributors to the life of the Nation-State, which is essentially unitary and

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sovereign. Pluralism, on the other hand, denies the State this over-riding function, and thinks of voluntary associations as independent and spontaneous bodies, capable of acting against the State as well as with it, and in no sense its creatures. Guild Socialism and Syndicalism laid stress on freedom rather than order: Fascism has the Hegelian preference for order, and bids men realise their freedom in the freedom of the State rather than in their individual or corporate capacities.

In the nineteenth century, Nationalism commonly appeared as a creed allied with some form of Liberalism, and fighting at once for national emancipation and unity and for guarantees of constitutional government according to the formulæ of parliamentary democracy. But it has been a common experience that, when once a people has achieved national unity under a parliamentary system, Nationalism is apt to seek a new political creed, and to become the ally of extreme Conservatism rather than of the more democratic parties. Thus, before the War, German and Italian Nationalism were both represented by the parties of the extreme Right, while French Nationalism found its most characteristic expression in the anti-democratic and royalist groups, and especially in the *Action Française* of

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Charles Maurras and his followers. This tendency has become even more marked since the War ; above all in the growth of Fascism, absorbing the old Nationalist Party in Italy, and in the so-called " National Socialism " of Herr Hitler and his associates in Germany. The Nationalists everywhere have moved away from parliamentary democracy, and towards some form of dictatorship ; while, at the other extreme, the Communists, from a point of view predominantly international, have challenged parliamentary democracy no less insistently. The defence of the nineteenth century tradition has thus been left to the parties and groups lying between these extremes, including the middle-class parties tinged with Liberalism, and the orthodox Social Democratic and Labour Parties ; and these middle groups have, in many countries, been forced into an uneasy and paralysing alliance for the defence of forms of government which they desire to use for widely divergent purposes. Any alliance of this sort runs, however, a grave danger of practical sterility ; and this sterility is apt to drive hesitant elements in the electorate towards one or other of the two extremes. Parliamentary democracy is thus further weakened, or even compelled, as in Germany to-day, to defend itself by temporary recourse to the

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expedients of those who assail it. The present German Chancellor (1931), for instance, has been driven to send the Reichstag home, and govern by means of a temporary dictatorship in order to preserve the post-War German political system from the danger of dissolution. Great Britain is almost alone in post-War Europe in having to face, so far, no important threat to its established system from either Right or Left ; for Fascism and Communism have alike failed so far to make any real impression upon the British mind. But even in Great Britain there has been a decay of faith in Parliament, manifested rather in a significant multiplication of parties and factions than in any deep-seated revolt or demand for a new institutional basis of political action.

**THE CHALLENGE TO
PARLIAMENTARISM**

THE CHALLENGE TO PARLIAMENTARISM

THE POLITICAL theorists of the nineteenth century seemed for the most part to imagine that with the gradual extension of the franchise, the gradual perfecting of the parliamentary machine, and the gradual acquisition by nations new to responsible parliamentary government of experience in its use, the problem of political structure would be settled for good and all. Few thinkers, however staunchly they uphold the parliamentary system, would now maintain that view in quite its old simplicity. It is increasingly recognised, even among believers in the "Sovereignty of Parliament," that a democratically elected Parliament can be, at best, only one vital expression of the consciousness of the community, that no political theory can afford to ignore the numerous forms of associative and institutional life of the community outside Parliament, and that the most democratic parliamentary system may fail in the hour of trial because it lacks driving force and does not provide the basis for a strong

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Government capable of guiding the community along creative lines of development. The Victorians, indeed, were content with parliamentarism partly because in accordance with their philosophy of *laissez-faire* they thought of the countries of the world as deriving their creative momentum not from the State, but from the competitive endeavours of private enterprise. The State was thought of rather as a policeman, or at most a referee, than as a body designed effectively to control and organise the national effort. Even, then, if Parliaments did appear to be lacking in initiative and will-power, this did not seem greatly to matter ; for these qualities could be supplied apart from any direct activity on the part of the State.

This change of attitude towards Parliamentarism is due largely to a changed idea of what States ought to be and do. The growth in the scale of economic enterprise, the development of what is called "Economic Imperialism," and the pressure of the organised workers for social reforms and for a better distribution of wealth have radically altered the normal work of the modern State, in both home and international affairs. States are now called upon not only to undertake a vast mass of social legislation, but also to an increasing extent to organise and control the economic life of Society.

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Rapidly changing conditions at home and abroad make necessary a constant recasting of the economic machine ; and the ever-increasing demand for overseas markets or for the loan of foreign capital causes the State to intervene more and more in order to protect the interests of its trading nationals, and twines economics and politics inextricably together in the sphere of international relationships. Consequently, States and Governments are called upon to be more active and vigorous in the formation and pursuit of policies and plans of action ; and the careful checks and balances of the old parliamentary system are felt as a severe and sometimes crippling restraint on swift or decisive action.

There is a second reason still more fundamental for the contemporary decay of parliamentary government. In Great Britain, at any rate, the issues dividing the two great parties during the Victorian era, while they were for the most part clear enough, were relatively small, and rested on an assured basis of agreement concerning the general structure of Society. In the United States the dividing issues were far less clear and even less fundamental ; and the common basis of agreement was—and is—even wider. In neither country was any considerable party or group even trying to change

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the structure of Society in any far-reaching way. Socialism existed as a doctrine, but not as a party ; and there was no other challenge to the established order. Where, as in France or Italy, there was less common basis of agreement about the structure of Society, the parliamentary system worked far less smoothly and with less assurance.

To-day, in all the leading countries except the United States, conditions are radically changed. In the first place, the European countries have by no means recovered from the upheavals of the War. There are new countries, such as Poland, Jugo-Slavia and Czecho-Slovakia which have not yet settled down to the idea of common nationhood, or learnt by experience the arts of administration. There are countries, like Germany, which have undergone a political upheaval and are working a new political machine under difficulties made greater by continued foreign interference in their affairs. Italy and Russia, in their several ways, have thrown over parliamentarism, and are experimenting in new conceptions of government as well as with new machinery. France is still in a condition of War neurosis which makes prediction of its political future very difficult ; and even Great Britain is finding her long-established parliamentary machine more and

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more inadequate to the growing complexity of her political and economic problems. Moreover, all the European States, except Russia, have superimposed upon themselves a new machine of international government in the League of Nations, and are experimenting with this new instrument under exceptional difficulties created by their own neurotic condition and by the unsettlement of the entire political and economic basis of European Society.

SOCIALISM VERSUS CAPITALISM

SOCIALISM VERSUS CAPITALISM

UNDERLYING all these hesitations and experiments is the great question of Socialism *versus* Capitalism. Almost every State, except the United States of America, has now within its borders a powerful Socialist movement organised as a party and strong enough to count in the making and unmaking of Governments. And one State, the U.S.S.R., is definitely Socialist in structure and policy and stands wholly apart from the comity of capitalism, challenging the other nations with its objective demonstration of Socialism as a practical system as well as a theoretical creed. It is true that the Socialist Parties of other countries for the most part repudiate Communism, and work for a gradual conquest of political power, and a gradual establishment of Socialism by parliamentary means. But this cannot alter the fact that class distinctions, and a difference of class point of view, now provide the most fundamental dividing line in the politics of the European nations, or that their influence is strong

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enough to have destroyed once and for all the old community of fundamental assumptions among the contending political parties. Nor can it be denied that the existence of Russia, with its Five Years' Plan and its bold and challenging attempt to reorganise the entire life of that great country—agricultural as well as industrial—on Socialist lines, is bound to react powerfully on the politics of other countries.

Fascism, as we have seen, is above all an attempt to override class distinctions by making the ideas of Nationalism and the Corporative State the dominant note in contemporary politics. But I, for one, do not believe that this attempt can in the long run succeed. It might, in this or that country, if in the modern world any one country could really isolate itself from the impact of world forces. But Socialism, as a movement based on the working-class, is a world-wide movement, bound to intrude itself into the internal affairs of every State. Italy may hold it off for a time by strong measures of dictatorship ; but even Italy cannot keep it permanently out unless it can succeed in truly reconciling the claims of Capital and Labour within the existing economic system. America may hold it off longer by continually broadening the basis of American capitalism through the wide diffusion of industrial ownership

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among the working-class ; but this policy depends on the maintenance of high and rising wage-rates and on America's ability to make use of her huge productive resources without an upset of economic equilibrium such as threatens her to-day. As long as the non-Socialist world can offer to its workers rising wages and reasonably steady employment it can probably stand out for capitalism against its own Socialists at home, and the influence of Russia upon it. But can the non-Socialist world continue to ensure these advantages ? They look none too secure to-day ; and I doubt if they can again be made secure.

If, as I believe, the world is on the verge of a Socialist era, what form is political organisation in the future likely to assume ? The political controversies of the twentieth century will turn, not on the nineteenth century issues of extension of the suffrage, vote by ballot, initiative referendum and recall, the powers, merits and demerits of Second Chambers, or of constitutional monarchies or republics, but rather on far more fundamental problems of the very structure of Society. The main question will be, not how we are to organise the machinery of government, but how we are to organise the entire economic and political life of the community, and of one community in relation to

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others. Politics and economics will cease to be thought about as mainly separate problems, and will present themselves as one and the same problem.

The unity is, of course, common ground between Fascism and Communism, which alike challenge the old divisions which the parliamentary system has so far accepted as natural. Parliamentarism's chance of survival, under the changed conditions, seems to me to depend on its power to adapt itself to the new tasks which this unity of politics and economics presents. Parliaments, if they are to survive as sovereign, have to find ways of bringing the economic life of the nations under their effective control ; for this economic life is crying out for organisation—for national and international planning—and if Parliaments resign this task into other hands they will, under modern conditions, be throwing away the substance of authority, and keeping only the shadow—and even that they will not keep for long.

But Parliaments, as they exist to-day, are obviously incapable of organising or controlling effectively the economic life of Society. They are too vacillating, too inexpert, too congested with a mass of secondary business, to take such a mighty task in hand. Either they must reform their ways, or they will be

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superseded by some more efficient instrument of control.

I do not mean, of course, that a Parliament, any more than a Soviet Congress, can or should undertake directly the detailed control of industries and services. Far from it. That form of Socialism is thoroughly out of fashion and never likely to be revived. Any system which attempts to co-ordinate and control the economic life of the community must be worked through a variety of functional organisations, to which large powers must be delegated in their several spheres. The central organs of government must, if they are to work even tolerably well, fling off all detail and delegate all specific administrative tasks. If Parliaments anywhere can do this, and concentrate all their time and energy on the supreme direction of policy, they may survive, and deserve to survive.

But can they ? I gravely doubt it ; for I doubt if the parliamentary method of election is really suitable to the new tasks of government. Parliamentarism has worked only where it has been based firmly on a party system, presenting the electorate with rival candidates offering variants upon a broad community of policy and objective. It has worked because, and only because, there has been enough community of view for an incoming Government neither to try

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nor usually even to desire, to undo the work of its predecessor. But in Europe, at any rate, it is impossible to rely on this basis for the future.

The business of Governments is to govern. Now government, in any real sense, will become impossible if successive Governments come to spend most of their time in undoing their predecessors' work. Moreover, if any party sets out really to change the fundamental basis of Society, it must feel assured of its own prolonged continuance in power, and against the undoing of its work by the opposite party. But under the parliamentary system it can never have either of these assurances ; for both of them are plain denials of the postulates of parliamentary democracy. I find it impossible to believe that any country will ever achieve Socialism by parliamentary means, though parliamentary methods may avail to carry it a certain distance along the road. For Socialism involves a radical change in the basis of Society, such as could not possibly be carried through to the end piecemeal, or in face of all the checks and balances of a neatly adjusted parliamentary system.

If, then, Socialism is to come, I believe it will involve transitionally some form of dictatorship and, when that is over, a system of administration far more closely resembling Sovietism

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than parliamentarism. In saying this I am postulating neither violent revolution as a means, nor Communism on the Russian model as the instrument. Different countries, with widely different economic and social conditions, will need to work out their own salvation each in its own way. What those ways will be can no more be prophesied to-day than the present system in Russia or Italy could have been prophesied before they were brought into being. Communism, of course, did begin with a theory based on Marx; but, while this theory to a great extent supplied the driving-force of the movement, no study of Marxism would have enabled the student to predict the course of the Russian Revolution or the subsequent history of the Soviet system. Fascism started almost without any theory at all, save the broad idea of aggressive popular Nationalism, and tried to grow its theory along with its propaganda, justifying what it found itself doing rather than doing what it conceived in advance to be just. This may be its weakness ; for Fascism may prove to have no sufficient roots. But it remains true that living systems of Government grow : they are not made after a preconceived pattern. It has, however, been demonstrated that they can grow very fast.

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turies*

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| „ | „ | some <i>English Thinkers</i>
of the <i>Augustan Age</i> |
| „ | „ | some <i>great French</i>
<i>Thinkers of the Age</i>
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